

MINUTES
Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Task Force
Thursday December 18, 2008
Council Chambers
Municipal Building
93 Cottage Street

I. Call to Order at 8:37 AM

Members Present: Paul Paradis, Chair; Anne Krieg, Secretary; Nathan Young, Fred Cook, Mary Opdyke, George Seavey, Charlie Phippen, Greg Gordon, Amy Powers

II. Excused Absences

Young moved, with a second from Krieg to excuse Bahr and Fogg. All were in favor of the motion.

III. Minutes

A. December 11, 2008 will be addressed next meeting.

IV. Adoption of agenda was passed by a motion from Young-and a second from Cook.

V. Staff Reports

Paradis reviewed his Council report. The Council authorized coordination of the recycling bins.

VI. Regular Business

A. Continue discussion with Ocean Properties on future plans for West Street and service to Cruise Ship tenders and passengers.

No discussion ensued.

B. Taxi Tours

i. Report of GTA Subcommittee

ii. Discussion and possible action on Taxi/Tours policy recommendations

Krieg reviewed the work of the *Ground Transportation Sub-Committee* as attached. Phippen reviewed Phase Ii for the Plan to allow a queue, which would need capital funding for construction. Young added that if a T105 facility is located at the Town Pier, then Phase II will take a different form. The plan as proposed currently is for the 2009 season.

Opdyke questioned operations.

Young noted that the plan allows for open taxi service to cruise ship passengers. He added that the tours not affiliated with the cruise industry needs to be located on private property.

Seavey questioned if relocation to Harborview Park would be necessary.

Young responded that a couple of spaces in front of Harbor place should be dedicated for temporary signage and information to the public.

Directional's signage would be necessary and full access to the Bar Harbor Inn would be maintained.

Paradis noted that the kayak tours may have difficulty queuing with other tours and backing up is difficult. Kayak tours were noted as part of the cruise industry's land-based tour offerings.

Gordon reviewed existing congestion issues with coordinating with the kayak companies.

Opdyke remained concerned on the pick up and drop off capabilities for the taxi/tour operators.

Young responded that there are no exclusive rights to those spaces in front of Harborview Park as part of the proposed plan. It is the town's intent to provide taxi services to passengers as the usual type of public service given at a port. He added that only licensed operators would be allowed in that area.

The group discussed how information would disseminate about the plan. The spaces in front of Harbor Place would be dedicated for this purpose. A temporary signage or kiosk could be located.

Phippen moved, with a second from Young to recommend to the Town Council the following: On cruise ship days (only), West Street shall be made one-way from the Town Pier to the Main Street intersection. The parking spaces in Harborview Park shall be deemed a ground transportation area only. Two spaces in front of Harbor Place will be dedicated to information, pedestrian overflows and other public services. Phase II of this plan is recommended for further staff study to change the queuing to be parallel to the street and thus widen and open Harborview Park pedestrian spaces.

This motion was discussed at length by the group.

Eben Salvatore was present, representing Ocean Properties. He expressed concern with loss of the viewshed with cars parked at Harborview Park.

Motion passed 8:1 with Seavey dissenting.

C. Review of 2008 season

i. Passenger caps

Phippen noted to the group that the 5500 cap was based on the super ships' designs. He also noted we had not exceeded them this year

Powers added there are 5 new ships at Carnival that may exceed 5,000 passengers. These types of boat, noted as the Genesis class, are being accommodated in other ports.

ii. Operational problems

Phippen reviewed the cancellations. He noted that tender operations are still an issue, notably that wake zones and prop wash were a daily problem. There were reports of loss of gear from fishermen.

Routes were discussed and where the lanes are designated as well as the process of how they were established.

Group discussed at length noting specific events that occurred last season.

iii. Recommendations

It was generally agreed there is a need to communicate to industry when there are concerns. It was noted that there are currently mechanisms for debriefing with cruise ship management.

Paradis said that members from Cruise Line International Association (CLIA) had indicated there could be a scheduled briefing in the morning with the tender management.

Powers moved, with a second from Cook, to table any recommendation to the next meeting. All were in favor of the motion.

Gordon expressed a concern with turning people away with the caps, which should allow more discretion to not lose a ship. He added that the town should keep competitive with other small ports in Maine.

Motion passed with Seavey opposed.

D. Sidewalk Enhancements - Discussion and possible action on any recommendations of how to proceed with allocating funds for sidewalk and accessibility improvements.

Phase II for Harborview Park was discussed as a project.

Walking tour routes were noted as a priority

Wheelchair study/survey by a resident was done in the past. It was unknown of the study's location.

Group discussed the requisite nexus with infrastructure improvements and the fees.

Krieg offered the walking tour route, Mount Desert Street/Holland Avenue and Phase II implementation as the 3 top priority areas for discussion.

Powers added that accessibility could also be a priority project.

Gordon requested consideration for widen sidewalks

Krieg and Young both noted that the Public Works Director has a sidewalk improvement program and perhaps funds could be added to that existing line item.

Young moved with a second from Phippen to recommend the funds allocated to sidewalk and accessibility improvements be directed to projects identified in the town's sidewalk improvement program for the downtown corridor.

All were in favor.

E. Discussion and establishment of a timeline to deal with action items identified during the November 13, 2008 meeting. - tabled

F. Walking Map - Report from walking map sub-committee.

Krieg noted there issues with funding the creation and editing of this map during this fiscal year.

Powers noted that perhaps Maine DOT in house.

Phippen moved with a second from Opdyke for Powers and Krieg to investigate whether the map could be done with Maine DOT in house staff.

All were in favor of the motion.

G. July 4th Cruise operations recommendations

Phippen reviewed his decision to turn away a 2010 booking for the 4th of July, the ship was the Maasdaam.

Parade is now back onto Eden Street and not using Holland Avenue.

Young indicated he felt it was better to have the Eden corridor open for access regardless of whether a cruise ship was in the harbor. He added that if a ship is coming, then we cannot accommodate the cruise ship tour buses from 9 AM to 1 PM with the route location for the parade.

Paradis indicated the industry did understand our challenges for accommodations on this date.

It was noted that we do not have one scheduled for 2009.

The appropriateness of staff not taking the reservation was discussed.

It was questioned generally if the industry would want to come if no tours can be accommodated. There may be passenger experience issues.

VII. Public Comment

There were none.

VIII. Items for next agenda

The noted items as tabled would be discussed as well as a discussion on the next priority items for implementation.

IX. Set next meeting time, date and place

A. 8:30am, January 8, 2009.

B. 8:30 January 22, 2009

X. Adjournment 10:45 AM by acclimation of the Chair.

These minutes were prepared by Anne Krieg, Secretary to the Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Task Force for their consideration at their meeting January 22, 2009.